



**Lutheran Disaster Response**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

Lutheran Disaster Response brings God's hope, healing and renewal to those whose lives have been disrupted by disasters, in the United States and around the world. When the dust settles and the headlines change, we stay to provide ongoing assistance to those in need.

## **How we work in the United States**

### **Local response**

- One of the principles of disaster recovery work is that the disaster response is local. This means we work through congregations and organizations that already have a relationship with and are a part of the impacted community.

### **Emotional and spiritual care**

- When a disaster strikes, the effects are not only the visible signs of destruction. As people work to recover, Lutheran Disaster Response is there to walk with them, providing emotional and spiritual care to help them not only rebuild their homes but their lives as well.
- Professional caregivers, such as pastors, can feel the effects of disaster intensified as they continue to be present for their communities while often dealing with their own losses. Lutheran Disaster Response works to create respite opportunities for these caregivers so that they can recharge and renew in order to more deeply and healthily reconnect to their community.
- Through Camp Noah, a program of Lutheran Social Services of Minnesota, Lutheran Disaster Response offers unique opportunities for children to process the effects of disaster.
- With our devotional materials, "New Every Day" and "Meeting God in the Ruins," Lutheran Disaster Response offers resources for both those affected by disaster and those who volunteer in disaster-impacted communities.

### **Volunteer coordination**

- Lutheran Disaster Response coordinates volunteers through our local affiliates in order to help affected homeowners and communities with muck out, clean-up and rebuilding. This work employs a wide range of skills and interests and helps save money for homeowners. Lutheran Disaster Response also helps promote and publicize volunteer reception centers.

### **Long-term recovery**

- For those impacted by a disaster, the process of seeking help can be confusing. Lutheran Disaster Response through affiliates or long-term recovery committees provides case management to help those affected by disaster navigate the process of recovery.
- Recovery from a disaster extends far beyond the news cycle. Lutheran Disaster Response works with communities to set up long-term recovery committees to help determine and address the unmet needs of affected communities that exist months and even years after a disaster strikes.

## **How we work around the world**

### **Global network**

- Working to leverage global support for local responses, Lutheran Disaster Response is able to create and take advantage of opportunities that make the most of every gift to empower local communities in their own recovery.

### **Refugee communities**

- Many times disasters like civil unrest, drought and famine lead people to become refugees as they leave their homes in search of safety, food and water. Lutheran Disaster Response is there to meet these people's needs by helping to set up refugee camps through our member organizations and with our companions.
- Refugees of international disasters usually arrive at refugee camps with little more than the clothes on their backs. Lutheran Disaster Response works to help meet the holistic needs of these communities by providing food, water, shelter and sanitation as well as security, schooling and emotional care.

### **Disaster risk reduction**

- The most cost effective disaster response is the preventative one. Working with local companions and international member organizations, Lutheran Disaster Response is helping communities build on their assets to reduce the effects of likely disasters in their region. These efforts may not make the news but they save lives, and by reducing the costs of disaster responses, free up funds for other use.
- Understanding that certain areas of the globe are more disaster-prone than others, Lutheran Disaster Response has been working through its membership in The Lutheran World Federation to set up emergency hubs across the globe. In this way, when disasters strike, crucial resources will be close at hand, leading to more timely, effective and efficient responses.

### **Linking relief, rehabilitation and development**

- In collaboration with the ELCA's World Hunger program, Lutheran Disaster Response is able to create connections between our disaster response and development work. This relationship allows both programs to share resources and expertise across projects, leading to more resilient communities.
- Through the long-standing relationships of the ELCA with global companions and partners, Lutheran Disaster Response is capable of taking into account not only the immediate needs of the moment but the long-term goals of the communities in which we engage.